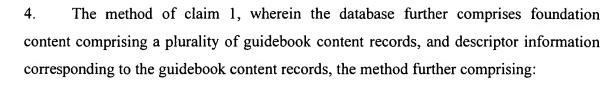
WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1. A method of providing personalized information comprising:
- a) providing a database comprising a plurality of contributor content records
 and a plurality of contributor profile records, wherein each contributor
 content record corresponds to a contributor profile record; and
 wherein the database further comprises descriptor information
 corresponding to the contributor content records;
- b) obtaining a user profile record;
 - c) obtaining a user search query;
 - d) comparing the user search query with at least a portion of the descriptor information;
 - e) comparing at least a portion of the user profile record with at least two contributor profile records;
 - f) providing personalized information comprising contributor content records based upon the results of the comparisons in (d) and (e) above.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising using information submitted by a contributor to increase the number of contributor content records in the database, and providing valuable consideration to the contributor in exchange for the submitted information.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising varying the valuable consideration provided to the contributor, based on the quality of the contributor's contributor content records, wherein such quality is assessed by at least one user.

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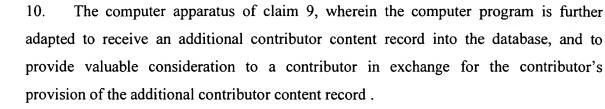


- a) comparing the user search query and at least a portion of the user profile record with at least a portion of the descriptor information corresponding to a guidebook content record, and
- b) providing additional personalized information comprising guidebook content records based upon the results of the comparison in (a) above.
- 5. The method of claim 4, wherein the database further comprises travel provider content comprising a plurality of travel provider content records, and descriptor information corresponding to the travel provider content records, the method further comprising:
 - a) comparing the user search query and at least a portion of the user profile record with at least a portion of the descriptor information corresponding to each travel provider content record, and
 - b) providing additional personalized information comprising travel provider content records based upon the results of the comparison in (a) above.
- 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the user profile record and the contributor profile records each comprise a plurality of corresponding data elements.
- 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the plurality of corresponding data elements comprises personal identification information, travel interests information, travel-related attributes, dining and accommodation preference information, favorite destination information, and aspired destination information.

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8. The method of claim 6, wherein the step of comparing at least a portion of the 1 user profile record with at least two contributor profile records comprises the steps of: 2 a) comparing a first data element of the user profile record with a 3 corresponding first data element of a first contributor profile record to 4 generate a first comparison score; 5 b) comparing a second data element of the user profile record with a 6 corresponding second data element of the first contributor profile 7 record to generate a second comparison score; 8 c) combining the generated comparison scores to calculate a first match rating between the user profile record and the first contributor profile 10 record; 11 d) repeating steps (a) - (c) using a second contributor profile record to 12 calculate a match rating between the user profile record and the second 13 contributor profile record; and 14 e) using the calculated match ratings to provide the personalized information. 15 16 9. A computer apparatus for providing personalized information comprising: 17 a) a database comprising a plurality of contributor content records, each 18 record corresponding to a contributor profile record, and each record 19 corresponding to descriptor information; and 20 b) a computer program adapted to receive a user profile record and a user search query, the program comprising a content match algorithm 22 adapted to compare at least a portion of the user profile record with at 23 least a portion of at least two contributor profile records, and to 24 compare the user search query with at least a portion of the descriptor 25 information, such that there is generated personalized information 26 27 comprising contributor content records in response to the user search query. 28



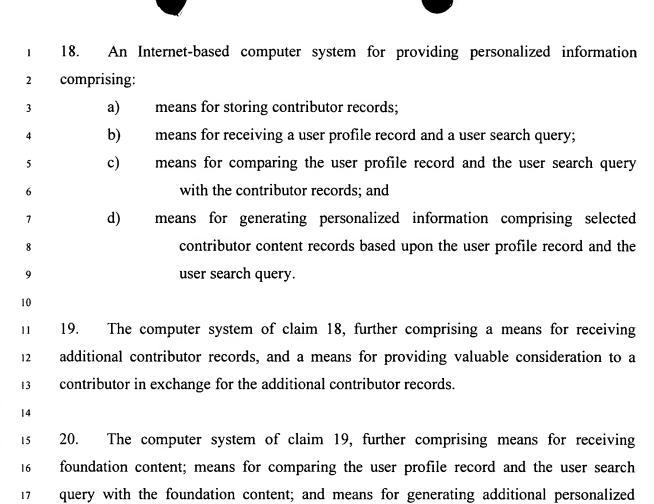
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11. The computer apparatus of claim 10, wherein the database further comprises foundation content including travel guidebook content records, the guidebook content records having corresponding descriptor information, and wherein the content match algorithm is further adapted to compare the user search query and at least a portion of the user profile record with at least a portion of the descriptor information corresponding to a guidebook content record, allowing the computer program generate and provide to a user additional personalized information comprising guidebook content records.

12. The computer apparatus of claim 10, wherein the user profile record includes at least two personal travel data elements related to a user, and wherein each contributor profile record includes at least two corresponding personal travel data elements related to a contributor.

13. The computer apparatus of claim 12, wherein the user personal travel data elements comprise information relating to the user's personal identification information, travel interests information, travel-related attributes, and dining and accommodation preference information; and wherein the contributor personal travel data elements comprise information relating to the contributor's personal identification information, travel interests information, travel-related attributes, and dining and accommodation preference information.

- 14. The computer apparatus of claim 12, wherein the content match algorithm compares at least a portion of the user profile record with at least a portion of a contributor profile record by the steps of:
 - a) comparing a first personal travel data element of the user profile record with a corresponding first personal travel data element of the contributor profile record, and generating a first comparison score;
 - b) comparing a second personal travel data element of the user profile record with a corresponding second personal travel data element of the contributor profile record to generate a second comparison score; and
 - c) combining the generated comparison scores to calculate a match rating between the user profile record and the contributor profile record.
 - 15. The computer apparatus of claim 14, wherein the step of combining each of the generated comparison scores includes multiplying each generated comparison score by a weighting factor to calculate a product, and adding each calculated product together to calculate the match rating.
- 16. The computer apparatus of claim 14, wherein the personalized information comprises a displayed list of selected contributor content records, and for each content record, an indicator of its relevance corresponding to the its match rating.
- 17. The computer apparatus of claim 14, wherein the personalized information comprises a displayed list comprising selected contributor content records, the content records displayed in an order relating to their relevance as determined by the match ratings for each displayed content record.



information comprising selected foundation content records based upon the user profile

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record and the user search query.